



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 1

1 CONGRESS STREET, SUITE 1100
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02114-2023

OFFICE OF THE
REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR

February 26, 2009

Michelle Ricci
Federal Aviation Administration
New England Regional Office
12 New England Executive Park
Burlington, Massachusetts 01803

RE: Final Environmental Impact Statement/Final Environmental Impact Report for New Bedford Regional Airport Improvements Project, New Bedford, Massachusetts CEQ # 20090016, EOE Number 10316

Dear Ms. Ricci:

In accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, we have reviewed the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the proposed New Bedford Regional Airport Improvements Project, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

The FEIS describes modifications proposed at the New Bedford Regional Airport to address safety deficiencies for the primary runway at the airport, Runway 5-23, so that it meets FAA safety standards. The project no longer includes work previously described in the DEIS intended to increase the aviation capacity of the airport by extending Runway 5-23. The new proposal addresses our previous objections to the project based on the potential for severe and significant impacts to wetlands and other waters. We also note the ongoing work by the New Bedford Regional Airport Commission to develop appropriate mitigation for wetland impacts associated with the safety improvements and we request the opportunity to remain actively involved in that process with the Corps of Engineers, FAA and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MADEP). We also recommend that the Record of Decision (ROD) provide specific information regarding project mitigation required by the Corps for their Clean Water Act Section

617-918-1010

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404 permit and the MADEP for the Wetlands Protection Act Variance they will need to issue for the project.

Please contact Timothy Timmermann of EPA's Office of Environmental Review at 617-918-1025 should you have any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ira W. Leighton", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Ira W. Leighton
Acting Regional Administrator

